THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes Sir, India is having fourth largest coal resource in the world. However, it is to be noted that only about 25% of this may be extractable. Further, coal reserves occur as horizontal deposit, which are to be extracted in a sequential manner starting from the top horizon. Total import of coal during 2008-09 is 59 Mt. (provisional), out of which 24 Mt. is coking coal and 35 Mt. non-coking coal. As per Annual Plan 2009-10 document, total demand supply gap in the country is 70 Mt.

Coastal power plants which are situated far away from coal producing States prefer imported coal instead of using indigenous coal on commercial considerations. Further, some other industries are also importing non-coking coal for blending purpose to improve quality of coal. Some coal is also being imported by the thermal power stations to meet environmental norms.

(b) No Sir. Coal India Ltd. through CMPDIL has taken action to enhance capacity of coal exploration through departmental resources and outsourcing. For expansion and modernization of departmental exploration equipments, a capital fund of Rs. 106 crores has been approved. This will lead to doubling the capacity from 2 lakh meter/ annum to 4 lakh meter/annum. To enhance the capacity through outsourcing, exploration/drilling in 18 coal blocks, involving 7.28 lakh meter of drilling has been awarded through open tendering for about Rs. 352 crores. Further, an MOU has been signed with MECL to take up long term exploration programme and exploration of 7 blocks involving 3.1 lakh meter of drilling has been awarded. A capital fund of Rs. 9.09 crores has also been approved for expansion of coal-core analysis facilities.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (c).

(e) After taking into account all the relevant factors, the Working Group on Coal and Lignite set up for formulation of Eleventh Five Year Plan has projected the total demand for coal by the terminal year of Eleventh Five Year Plan *i.e.* 2011-12 at 731.10 Mt. against which indigenous availability shall be of the order of about 680 Mt. leaving a demand supply gap of about 51 Mt. With a view to achieve the targeted production, a series of steps has been initiated through Annual Action Plans. It is expected that even the marginal demand supply gap in non-coking coal may be met through captive blocks, which would be adjusting their facilities in accordance with coal demand/requirement. Therefore, by the end of Twelfth Plan, no gap between demand and indigenous supply of non-coking coal is envisaged.

Environment conservation

3192. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken up any plan towards conservation of natural water bodies, forests stone hills and rivers affected by industrialization and other construction works;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A number of central sector and centrally sponsored schemes are being implemented by the Ministry for environment conservation which include National River Conservation Plan for rivers, National Lake Conservation Plan for urban lakes, National Wetland Conservation Programme for semi-urban and rural wetlands and mangroves, Integrated Development of Wildlife of Habitat's for conservation of wildlife and Integrated Forest Protection Scheme for protection of forests. While appraising projects from environmental angle, stringent conditions are stipulated to avoid adverse impacts on natural water bodies or ecologically sensitive forest area existing in near vicinity.

Requirement of coal in Rajasthan thermal power plants

†3193. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of coal required by thermal power plants in Rajasthan;

(b) the names of States and the quantum of that coal supplied by each of them;

(c) whether units of these power plants have to undergo shut-downs because of low quality of coal and excess of earth contents therein, which leads to power crisis;

(d) whether despite all this, the State has to depend on imported coal whose high cost, higher transportation costs and uncertain supply causes higher unit cost; and

(e) whether Government would take any action in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) As intimated by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to Coal India Limited (CIL) total quantum of coal required by thermal power plants of Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (RRVUNL) during 2008-09 was 12.8 million tonnes.

(b) Power stations of Rajasthan are getting coal predominantly from the coalfields of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) located in the State of Chhattisgarh. A small quantity of coal is also delivered from the coalfields of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) located in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.